powder, paper, paper board *etc.*, situated near, around the river Hindon is flown into the Hindon river and waste from the drainage is also being thrown into it;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to this waste the water of the river Hindon is neither drinkable nor fit for irrigation; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to improve the situation and to prevent waste to be flown in the river?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) Wastewater discharge from industries as well as domestic sources is a major cause of pollution in rivers. Under the Centrally sponsored scheme of Yamuna Action Plan (YAP) Phase-I, the towns of Saharanpur, Muzzafarnagar, Ghaziabad and Gautam Budhnagar located along Hindon, which is a tributary of river Yamuna, have been covered. Pollution abatement works pertaining to interception, diversion and treatment of sewage, low cost sanitation, improved wood crematoria, afforestation, public participation and awareness, *etc.* and amounting to Rs. 159.35 crore have been implemented in these four towns to reduce the domestic pollution load in river Hindon. A sewage treatment capacity of 269.5 million liters per day (mld) has been created in these towns under YAP Phase-I. Under the ongoing YAP Phase-II, schemes relating to institutional strengthening of the concerned local bodies, preparation of Master Plans and Detailed Project Reports for sewerage as well as public participation and awareness are under implementation in the four towns.

As per the information received from Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB), out of the 108 major water polluting industries discharging their waste water directly into river Hindon, 107 industries have installed effluent treatment plants and one unit has been closed down by UPPCB. Notices have been issued by UPPCB to 1 distillery unit, 5 sugar mills and 4 industrial units to comply with various pollution control norms.

As per the norms, no surface water is utilised for drinking without treatment and/or disinfection. As per report of UPPCB, the water of river Hindon is fit for irrigation.

Dense forest land

1900. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any action plan to make existing forest land dense and bring more area under forest in view of impending threat of global warming;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) to (c) In the National Action Plan on Climate Change announced by the Government, a National Mission for a 'Green India' has been mooted as one of the eight missions to *inter alia* help counter the effects of climate change through afforestation

programmes. The proposed national programme would focus on two objectives, namely increasing the forest cover and density as a whole of the country and conserving biodiversity.

Ecological balance

1901. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of automobiles is going to increase alarmingly in coming years;

(b) if so, projections for the next five years;

(c) whether Government has considered its impact on the environment particularly in Metros;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken to ensure that ecological balance is not disturbed which may be detrimental to health of people living in Metros?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) As per the latest data available, the total number of registered vehicles in the country as on 31st March, 2004 was 7,27,17,935. The number of registered motor vehicles had steadily increased at an average rate of 10% per annum during the years 1994-2004. With this rate of increase, the number of motor vehicles by the year 2012 is expected to be around 15,58,77,349.

(c) and (d) The Government has not carried out any specific study on the impact of vehicular pollution on the environment, however, ambient air quality in all metros is monitored regularly by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in collaboration with State Pollution Control Boards. The air quality monitoring is done in respect of oxides of nitrogen, sulphur dioxide and particulate matter. The data on ambient air quality in metros are available on the website of CPCB.

(e) Various steps taken by the Government to ensure that ecological balance is not disturbed are mentioned below:—

- Bharat Stage III emission norms have been made applicable in 11 mega cities, namely, National Capital Region, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad/Secunderabad, Kanpur, Pune, Surat and Agra) ***w.e.f.*** 01.04.2005 whereas Bharat Stage II emission norms have been made applicable in rest of the country. These norms would be made stricter ***w.e.f.*** 01.04.2010.
- Pollution Under Control norms for in-use vehicles have been made stricter ***w.e.f.*** 01.10.2004
- Restriction on the entry of trucks as well as interstate buses during peak traffic timings.
- Diversion of all interstate trucks and buses through by-pass roads thereby reducing congestion in the main city.